

POWER OF THE ROTHSCHILDS A CENTURY'S GROWTH

Humble Origin of the Banking House Whose Members Have Divided Europe Among Them

THE greatest trust the world has ever known is not in the United States, the supposed home of trusts. It has its tentacles locked fast all over Europe and it was the first great trust of history. Not only is it a trust but it is an unseen empire. This trust and this empire is made up of the members of one family, the family of Rothschild. In the story of this family trust are encompassed romance and intrigue, mystery, love, war and espionage beyond the realms of fiction.

This trust, made up of a single family, rules Europe with an iron hand. The European nations have their nominal heads, their rulers, but another and a secret sceptre exerts a power felt in every palace and in every peasant's hut, by every parent and child, by every potentate and every laborer, from the Pillars of Hercules to the furthest reaches of the kingdom of the Great White Bear. No nation in all Europe is independent of the unseen empire, and the political autonomy of one and all of them has been surrendered to the despotism of the Red Shield. This supremacy has been exercised for a century by this great house of bankers, and the secret of their vast power lies in their family harmony. They have pulled together through generations, and this is their policy, unity of the clan. For a hundred years this house has been a determining influence in European politics. There is no sovereign whose power reaches so far as that of this great financial house whose members if they so pleased could bring about a European war and without whose consent war is well nigh impossible. There have in the past been persons in the financial world who exercised a considerable influence over the Governments of civilized nations, but never anything approaching that possessed by the house of Rothschild today. For a hundred years there has been a Rothschild in Budapest, in Paris, in Vienna and in London, and though they frequently differed in their political views they never at any time acted in opposition in any matters in which the affairs of the Rothschild business was concerned.

dingy pawnbroker's shop in Frankfort's Judengasse. What was this man's name? When was he born? No one knows. Some time between 1740 and 1750 he must have seen the light. His father was called simply Isidor, or "peasant." It was about as much of a name as a Jew needed who was locked by night in his ghetto and treated like a dog by day. A century ago the founder of the house.



Mr. Rougier with Baron and Baroness de Rothschild



BARONESS DE ROTHSCHILD AND CHILDREN



Baroness Henri de Rothschild Skating

Their Influence Now Felt in Every Capital—Maxims to Which the Family Still Lives Up

In London eight hours before the victory was known, dolefully shaking his head at rumors of disaster and buying everything in sight through a score of agents. He cleared \$1,000,000 on the coup. Nathan himself never doubted Napoleon's ultimate defeat. His house won heavily upon the event. For twenty years thereafter it was the chosen intermediary for almost every royal loan in Europe. Before 1830 the Rothschilds had placed

house, Alfred, Lionel's second son, who is a financier, a man of business and Leopold, the third, who is devoted to sport, are popular in society.

A curious thing is that in every country the Rothschilds assume the typical appearance of its people. Lord Rothschild of England much resembles Lord Salisbury. The Paris Rothschilds are perfect Frenchmen in appearance. Walter Rothschild, son of Lord Rothschild, is a fair haired young giant—the original Mayer Anselm was red haired. William Karl Rothschild of the Frankfort house is a typical German.

Even after the rise of the Rothschilds to affluence they maintained their simplicity and their lack of ostentation. Well on toward the '60s, even later, they still lived in the Jewish Lane in Frankfort, the wife of the first great Rothschild and the mother of the greatest. The girl who as Gudual Schnappe had married in 1770 the first Rothschild refused to be tempted away from No. 153, where she had lived and loved her husband and her children in the days of their obscurity.

An old woman, plain in dress and habits, she went out attended only by a maid and trudged to the theatre like the commonest of the common. Very grand looking people were always coming to see her and urging her to leave her dowdy surroundings and go to live in a palace, but she refused every plea, and at No. 153 she died as she had lived—plain and unpretending.

The present head of the English branch of this powerful clan is Lord Rothschild, and he is also head of the whole family of Europe. Outside his business his interests are centred largely in agriculture. The dairy stock at Tring Park contains some of the most valuable cattle in the world, and Lord Rothschild personally directs the conduct of the extensive agricultural operations carried on at the home farm. Lord Rothschild fulfils his social obligations by entertaining occasionally with great magnificence at his house in Piccadilly, but he has very few intimates outside the members



Mr. Leopold de Rothschild.



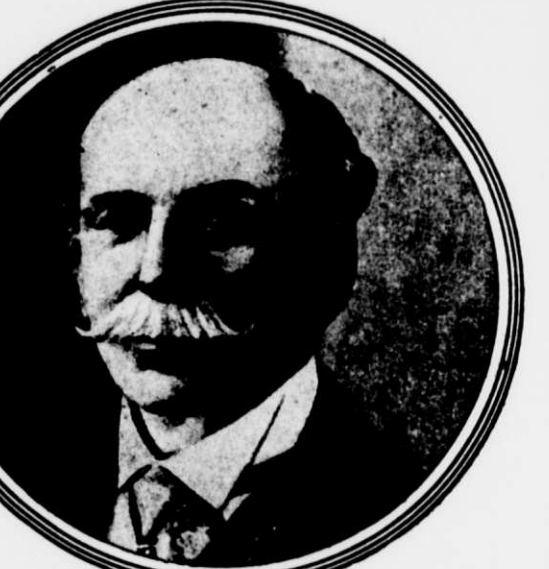
Baron Henri Rothschild



Lord Nathaniel Rothschild



Hon. L.W. Rothschild.



Mr. Alfred de Rothschild.

When one Rothschild says "No" a statesman may rest quite assured that not only will every other member of the family give the same answer but it is long odds that no other financial house will care to say "Yes."

It has been said that the house of Rothschild owns the British Empire. The English people call themselves free, but let us see. The war debt of England is \$1,000,000,000. This binds her till the end of time. She can never pay it and never hopes to do so. It is an eternal shackle. Of this vast sum every inhabitant of the British Isles owes over \$80, and every baby born in the island kingdom starts life with this burden upon him.

Nor is France more free, for the prosperous republic is likewise bound hand and foot by her indebtedness to the house of the Red Shield.

And Germany with her proud army and increasing array of mighty battleships is subservient to the great money power and dares not make a single move, whether it be to colonize in China or dig a canal or sign a treaty, without the sanction of the unseen empire that rules and reigns in the Fatherland.

With Russia it is the same, with Austria, with Italy with Spain—all are involved; the bank of each nation is Rothschild's. For the combined debts of Europe amount to twenty-five billions, and the Rothschilds control them. Twenty-five billions! What earthly power can stand against it? Who is there to dissolve this first and greatest of trusts that hovers like a shadow over Europe and makes it what it is?

And all this incomprehensible, incalculable power has been but a century in gaining its hold. The Astor fortune was founded ten years earlier and yet is but a pygmy beside the family wealth of the Rothschilds. The power of the Astor and Rockefeller and Morgan and Vanderbilt money is scarcely to be mentioned beside this of the Rothschilds. It encompasses the world in a certain sense, and not a ship can be out of sight upon earth's furthest shore without affecting it; frost cannot blight the peasant's crops in the furthest valley of Hungary; lightning cannot strike a petroleum tank in the hills of Caucasus; robbers cannot raise the standard of revolt in the Pyrenees; kings cannot woo pretty dancers with fair promises or defy revolutions to smite their follies; famine cannot grip the throats of remote wretches; floods cannot destroy or fire burn that the Rothschild fortune does not feel the effect in its balance sheets.

Men who have never heard their name plough and sow and reap for the Rothschilds or risk their lives to bear freights upon the sea for the benefit of the knights of the Red Shield.

John Jacob Astor was already a wealthy man before the original Rothschild had or needed so much as a name. He was known as Red Shield or Rothschild from the sign that hung over the door of his

Mayer Amschel, humble but financially illuminated, kept his dingy shop, the sign of the Red Shield over the door (whence comes the name), in the dirty quarter of Frankfort-on-Main known as the Judengasse. There with keen eyes and acquisitive fingers he stood behind his dusky counter changing money, discounting bills, pinching coins, buying cheap and selling dear, happy in the consciousness of daily accumulation.

Mayer Amschel's opportunity came with the first rifle crack at Lexington. Strange, is it not, that the foundations of the greatest fortune in the Old World should have been virtually laid in the New? The Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel put his soldiers up for hire; England leased them to fight her revolted colonists overseas and paid \$20,000,000 in gold for their services. This vast sum, backed by as much more, the Landgrave Wilhelm put into the hands of the cunning knight of the Red Shield. Frankfort was amazed at such a step. The great bankers could not understand why the Landgrave had passed them by and reposed his entire confidence (and his gold) with an unknown man.

The cause was simple enough. An intimate of Wilhelm, having heard much of the shrewdness and trustworthiness of old Mayer Amschel, strongly recommended him to the Landgrave as an eminently proper person with whom to leave the money. In consequence of this recommendation Rothschild, as he had already begun to be called, was summoned to the palace in Cassel, where he found the prince playing chess with a friend. Too tactful to interrupt the game, he stood behind the Landgrave's chair and held his peace, a mark of sense and sympathy which no chess player could fail to appreciate.

The game was going against Wilhelm, who felt a deeper interest in it on that account. After a long pause, uncertain what move to make next, he suddenly turned to Rothschild with the question: "Do you understand chess?"

Rothschild, who had been closely watching the board from his entrance, diplomatically replied:

"Sufficiently well, your Serene Highness, to induce me, were the game mine, to castle on the king's side."

It was a master stroke; it turned defeat to victory and so delighted the Prince that he clapped his adviser on the shoulder, exclaiming: "You are a wise man. He who can extricate a chess player from such a difficult y as I was in must have a very clear head for business. A man with such a brain must be capable of taking care of other people's money."

Knowledge of the game which had so charmed Haroun-al-Rashid, Tamerlane and Charlemagne was never turned to better advantage. The counsel to castle moved to the money lender the use of \$20,000,000 and generations of financial glory.

Rothschild proved himself worthy



Mr. Leopold de Rothschild Wiring off a Probable Winner



Baroness Edmond de Rothschild

of the trust. The Landgrave, after the battle of Jena, fleeing from the Napoleonic wrath, confided his silver and bulky treasures, amounting to millions, to the banker, who concealed them in the hogheads of his wine cellar. When Wilhelm, then Elector, returned eight years afterward Mayer Amschel was dead, but his son, Amschel—or Anselm—the younger, made out the account, with interest, which the Prince refused to take, declaring that he should have lost the principal but for the fidelity of the father.

The Elector was about to withdraw the sum when Napoleon's escape from Elba threw all Europe into consternation and so alarmed Wilhelm that he begged Rothschild to keep it at 2 per cent. interest per annum. The deposit remained with the house of the Red Shield for nine more years and was then returned to the Elector's successor, strictly accounted for to the last kreuzer.

Before old Amschel died he was able to give to each of his five sons one of the great States of Europe as a financial kingdom. There is something epic, tremendous, about this partition of a continent by the old money lender of the Judengasse. So Charlemagne divided among his sons the world empire he had conquered; so Napoleon dealt out kingdoms to his marshals and his negligible brothers. But he of the Red Shield had

found an empire more lasting than those carved out by the sword—the empire of gold.

The eldest son chose Germany; Solomon elected Austria; Nathan, England; Charles went to Italy, and Jacob, as his share, took the troubled land of France. The five brothers constituted but one firm, in which all had an equal interest, conducting their business as branch houses in as many cities, Frankfort, London, Paris, Naples and Vienna.

Nathan Mayer, the third son, far exceeded his father or any of his brothers in commercial genius. His attention was early called to England as a field for action—he had not then become a partner—and thither he journeyed soon after reaching his majority. He commenced his career in Manchester as a money lender with less than \$500. At the end of five years he had \$1,000,000.

The Government employed him to

forward supplies to the British armies in Spain, and he actually had the audacity to smuggle them through the enemy's country. He was also charged with the transmission of subsidies to the Continental powers, and he faithfully performed the task. He had, moreover, the advantage of the earliest and most trustworthy information from his brothers in the various capitals and he was in a position to return it in kind.

Before long all ordinary means of communication were insufficient for his rapidly growing enterprise, and he determined to use carrier pigeons and fast sailing boats of his own for the transmission of news. His spies and secret agents covered the Continent. Reports in cipher of all important or pending events were tied to the legs of pigeons and he kept fast rowboats plying between Boulogne and Folkestone—sails were unfurled in a calm to connect with his mounted messengers and so keep the London office informed of the course of Continental events.

Nathan trusted to no agent for the news of Waterloo. Mounted on a fleet horse Rothschild waited only to see the beginning of the French rout, and spurred his steed to Brussels. There he took carriage to Ostend. A wild storm was raging, but a boatman undertook to ferry him to Dover, for \$500, and he was

loans aggregating \$6,000,000,000, on every penny of which there was a broker's commission for them.

The family council at which Nathan Mayer died while arranging a marriage of cousins added some new paragraphs to the maxims of the family. They were never to have anything to do with an unlucky man. They were to brook no disobedience of orders. They established a salutary law that their daughters should be pensioners, not partners. The sons alone were to inherit the major portion of the wealth and all the power. And these maxims are always followed.

"Remain faithful to the law of Moses.
"Remain united to the end.
"Consult your mother.
"Look on your wealth as a perpetual family trust.
"Intermarry.
"Never brook disobedience."

The Rothschild men nearly always marry Rothschild women, but Rothschild women are permitted to marry outside the clan.

Lord Roseberry married the daughter of Nathan Mayer Rothschild. Her dowry was a princely one, but it remained in the business and Roseberry has not had its management. The grandsons of the man who was locked in the Frankfort ghetto every night and all day Sunday now call themselves "De" and "Von." They have become a nobility.

Lionel Rothschild, eldest son of the English Nathan Mayer, became a baron in fact. His three brothers bore the same title by courtesy. The present head of the English house, Lord Nathaniel Mayer Rothschild, son of Lionel, is safely in the British aristocracy.

Marguerite Rothschild married the Duc de Grammont.

Hannah, as has been said, became Lady Roseberry.

Another girl of the family became Princess de Wagram; another the Baroness van Zuylen van Nijvelt. The Rothschild men nearly always have married Rothschild women.

Even in Austria the reigning Rothschild is always a nobleman. The death of Ferdinand and the more recent death of Albert were greeted with expressions of genuine grief by all Vienna. In Russia alone is the family without fame.

It was not easily that the Rothschilds gained their freedom from political and social proscription. For twelve years Lionel Rothschild was elected and re-elected a member of the British House of Commons. On each occasion he advanced to the Speaker's chair to take the oath of office and repeated the solemn phrases until at the words "On the true faith of a Christian" he was silent, the silence blocking his admission as a member. Not until 1863 was a law passed to permit a Jew to enter Parliament. It was afterward that Disraeli, one of the proud Spanish Jews, became Earl Beaconsfield.

Now, besides Lord Rothschild, with his country palace and his gorgeous town

of his own family, and to the vast majority of people he is but a name—a synonym for wealth and power.

In private life Lord Rothschild is the quietest and most unassuming of men. He still works hard, going into the City daily when he is in town or travelling up from Tring. At the latter place the station officials are ready to treat him like a prince, but he much prefers to slip quietly into the train with his black bag without any fuss. The casual stranger would not dream that he was the great financier, and there is a story that a new porter who did not know him treated him once with scant ceremony under the impression derived from the bag that he was a lawyer's clerk. He believes firmly in the high destiny of his race and takes a deep interest in the movement for the return to Palestine.

On one occasion a gentle who was dining with the Rothschilds had the bad taste to apply the term, "a regular Jew," to some person in opprobrium.

"In this house," said Lady Rothschild very distinctly down the table, "the word 'Jew' is a title of honor."

His favorite hobby is the Jews' Free School in Whitechapel, to which he contributes largely. When the Rothschilds entertain the elite of London society comes to the feast, and the display of wealth is lavish. The late Queen had a very high opinion of the couple, and they testified their sorrow and respect at her death by draping the front of their huge London house literally from top to bottom with purple and black for the funeral.

His younger brothers, Alfred and Leopold Rothschild, are far better known figures in general society. The first mentioned is among the great bachelor hosts in London and is one of the most entertaining dinner conversationalists in England. He possesses a collection of various objects of art that is world famed, but he studied his subject carefully for years before he attempted to buy anything. This was characteristic of the family to which he belongs. The Rothschilds never play with money; they understand the value of most things they buy, whether it be scrip, bonds, horses, pictures, or even a snuff box; what they do not understand they leave alone. Mr. Rothschild has written two interesting volumes on his own collection.

In almost every house in which a Rothschild resides there is to be seen in one of the rooms, usually the chief reception apartment, a rough stone, which indicates that the great family belongs to a race that has no abiding country until they return to Jerusalem.

SMELLED A GRAFTER
A Boston clubman recently returned from a visit to New York city. In discussing his trip one of his friends asked him whether he had a policeman in his pocket. The clubman hesitated for a moment, seriously questioning his friend's sanity, when the latter added: "I didn't know whether you could there a week without some grafter or other getting into your pocket."